

## POWER IN THE TONGUE

### SCRIPTURE: JAMES 3: 2- 12 //

**2** Indeed, we all make many mistakes. For if we could control our tongues, we would be perfect and could also control ourselves in every other way.

**3** We can make a large horse go wherever we want by means of a small bit in its mouth.

**4** And a small rudder makes a huge ship turn wherever the pilot chooses to go, even though the winds are strong. **5** In the same way, the tongue is a small thing that makes grand speeches.

But a tiny spark can set a great forest on fire. **6** And among all the parts of the body, the tongue is a flame of fire. It is a whole world of wickedness, corrupting your entire body. It can set your whole life on fire, for it is set on fire by hell itself.<sup>[b]</sup>

**7** People can tame all kinds of animals, birds, reptiles, and fish, **8** but no one can tame the tongue. It is restless and evil, full of deadly poison. **9** Sometimes it praises our Lord and Father, and sometimes it curses those who have been made in the image of God.

**10** And so blessing and cursing come pouring out of the same mouth. Surely, my brothers and sisters, this is not right! **11** Does a spring of water bubble out with both fresh water and bitter water? **12** Does a fig tree produce olives, or a grapevine produce figs? No, and you can't draw fresh water from a salty spring.

### ILLUSTRATION //

Who has a younger sibling that gets away with things you would have never gotten away with? Think of a time when your sibling (or friend if you may not have a sibling) got away with talking back to a figure of authority (mom, dad, family member, teacher, etc.)

Connection Point - what + how we speak holds power because God literally designed it that way! God himself spoke the world into creation. If we as believers are made into the image of God, why do we think what we say does not hold power?

## MAIN IDEA: THERE IS POWER IN WHAT WE SPEAK!

### POINT 1 // How we speak is a reflection of us.

- The word tells us that
  - There is power of life and death in the tongue
  - What we say, shows what is truly in our hearts

LUKE 6:45 // A good person produces good things from the treasury of a good heart, and an evil person produces evil things from the treasury of an evil heart. What you say flows from what is in your heart.

- If there is a tongue problem, then there is probably a heart problem.
  - A person who praises you in public, but dishonors you in private probably has jealousy or bitterness in the root of their heart
  - But a person who gets dishonored in public and chooses to still praise someone in private understands the grace of God.
- When you understand the power of the tongue, you can understand the posture of the heart.....
  - If you want to know who truly loves the Lord, listen to how they speak of others.
  - If you want to know who your 'real' friends are, listen to how they speak of your other friends,
    - chances are if they are not afraid to gossip about them to you, they aren't afraid to gossip about you.
- The true power of the tongue is once words fall out, there is no taking them back which is why James urges us to be careful of what we say

Proverbs 16:28 – “A perverse man sows strife, And a whisperer separates the best of friends.”

- In one sentence we can either build or destroy not only our relationships, but our witness for Christ!
  - While this can be scary, how amazing is this if we choose to speak life...

### POINT 2// What we speak has power over us!

- What you choose to say, has power to shape who you become
- Vs. 3-5
  - In the same way wind steers a boat or reins control a horse in where it should go, what we say chooses the course of who we become...
    - If you choose to speak negativity and discouragement, you will always live a life full of negativity and discouragement
    - If you choose to be someone who speaks into drama, do not be surprised when drama follows you!
    - Where there is oxygen breathing into a fire, a fire will always burn.
  - A person who speaks wisdom + truth has sought the counsel and wisdom of God

- If you choose to speak encouragement, not only will you be encouraged but you will live a life that is lead in encouragement no matter the situation around you
    - If you choose to speak in faith, then faith will rise within you
  - At the end of the day, James urges us to use our words to build rather than destroy.
    - If the enemy came to steal, kill and destroy, but Jesus came to give life more abundantly, how can we say we are followers of Jesus when our words only kill, steal, and destroy?
      - When you choose to say how much you hate someone, you kill their joy
      - When you choose to publicly shame someone, you choose to steal their confidence
      - When you choose to lie about someone, you are actively choosing to destroy their character and integrity.
    - True maturity does not come in how quickly we can pop off on someone, rather how quickly we can close our mouths and choose peace over reckless words.
- In order to live a life that is not only pleasing to the Lord, but actively live out our faith we must choose to speak life more abundantly over people.
  - The only times I recall seeing Jesus speak rather 'harshly' in the Bible is to religious people who spoke in judgment a whole lot more than they spoke in grace + love.
- The only way to gain control of our tongue is to
  - Keep the word in our hearts
  - Ask the Holy Spirit to help us in choosing our words

### HEALTH CHECK:

- Do you find yourself speaking more negatively about others and/or yourself?
- Do you find yourself using sarcasm more than encouragement?
- Do you find yourself with more negative thoughts about yourself than positive thoughts?

It was said of Jesus in **John 7:46**, "No man ever spoke like this Man." My prayer is the same would be said of Faith Students, that we would speak in love, grace, and life.

### ALTAR:

- Give students the opportunity to accept Jesus.
- Give students the opportunity to repent if they have struggled with their words.

- Give students the opportunity to be healed from their own 'self talk' that has been harmful to them.
- Give students the opportunity to write down what God says about them or another person they have been struggling with.

\*\*\*if properly sanctioned, allow students + leaders to flex the gift of prophecy / words of knowledge to pray over eachother!

A careless word may kindle strife,  
A cruel word may wreck a life;  
A bitter word may smite and kill,  
A brutal word will accomplish nil;  
but A gracious word may smooth the way,  
A joyous word may brighten a day;  
A timely word may lessen stress,  
A loving word may heal and bless.